

Taking Care--Documenting the Occupational Culture of Home Care Workers  
Archie Green Fellows Project, 2014-2015  
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Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**Anna Young interview, 2015-03-04 : interview conducted by Helen Marie  
Moss and Donald Eugene Stacy**

**INTERVIEW LOG**

00:00:00 Housekeeping items, forms.

00:01:26 I live in Columbia County, 35 miles from Astoria, Oregon.

00:02:06 Other jobs - part-time high school internship at the Lane County Dog Control, Forest Service as secretarial, medical insurance data entry for 11 years. Moved to Hillsboro for husband's job, then Columbia County.

00:04:19 I have been a homecare worker since 2004. Worked in various programs, but right now Medicaid clients. Has one client, who had a stroke, sharing hours with another home care worker. Discusses progress of this client now that he has home care workers helping. She also gives care as a volunteer to her mother.

00:06:32 I became a home care worker because friend of family, who is a case manager, asked me to try it. My friend thought I would be good and that I would love it. I was not so sure. First client was age 92 and I was the "respite" caregiver so his daughter could get out once in awhile.

00:08:16 It is fascinating to get into other people's world. You get attached even though you are not supposed to. I don't mind taking care of them. Relates some of her skills and accomplishments with clients, to help keep them in homes.

00:10:01 Talks about the Oregon Home Care Commission classes and how good they are, what other classes are needed.

00:11:30 Typical day - goes through her duties and tasks with stroke client. He is a jokester, but a gentleman. Personal care kept on a professional level. I encourage him to do things himself. Watch TV or play cards or do exercises for hands.

00:16:58 Get close to clients? I do become close. I know there is a "shut down" process, but happy they were able to stay in homes.

00:18:06 Hard to "turn it off?" Yes, had to learn to have "my time" as well. I walk with dogs to the creek to regroup.

00:19:30 Important to regroup because stressful situations outside of the actual care situation. Client budget is tight, wants to help them but can't or if they want to give you things and can't, accept it.

00:20:00 Stories? Past client, before classes had been established. Client was stubborn, hard to get someone to assist her. No family, one person supposed to be helping her, but wasn't. Home was a small trailer, horrifying place. No dementia, so refused to move, and nothing could be done. Had to gain confidence before washing sheets, took a long time. These programs that help people like her are awesome.

00:24:16 Sense of humor important? Depends on consumer. Helps with redirecting for dementia. Tells story about client concerned about a tree leaning too much and using humor instead of arguing.

00:26:30 It is the most gratifying to help someone, turn around a bad day with a funny story. Keep them in their home rather than a facility.

00:27:55 Many things are challenging. If clients are confused or mad, bad news from family members that upsets client, putting client in a confused state.

00:29:10 Union? Helped tremendously, support us, recognize us. I have gone to rallies, blitzes, union has trained us how to do these things. Example of union organizer helping her with a client situation. Has done lobby days with legislators, enjoys them. Worked in politics in 2012, canvassing for a local politician.

00:32:00 One thing would tell someone who has never done caregiving job? Very rewarding and a challenge.

00:32:17 Hobbies? Travel, horseback riding, looking up political stuff. Never political before, but now write letters to politicians because they have helped us tremendously.

00:33:08 Anything else? Thanks for doing this, show people not just a job. There are volunteer opportunities. She takes people out on off time, with permission. Her client used to fish, likes to watch the boats go by on the river.

35:14 Do you feel valued by community? Sometimes family members have no clue what we do. Others think they know but don't. In town, issue of neighbors talking to her, but she can't

discuss client with them due to confidentiality. My own family doesn't always understand what I do, I want them to understand so I won't be put in a facility against my will.

38:03 End of interview.